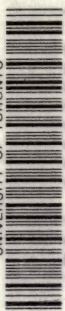


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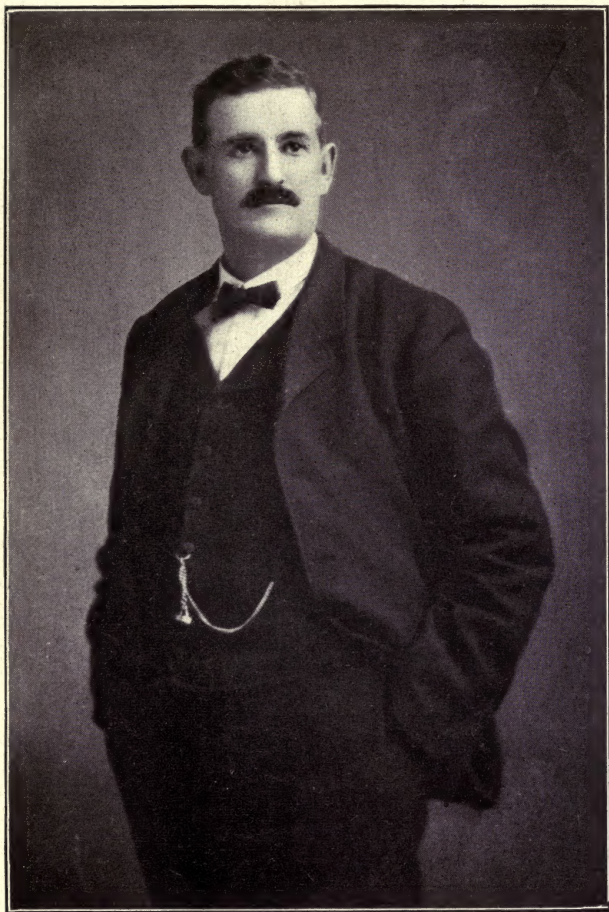
In Memoriam

"TO LIVE IN HEARTS WE LEAVE
BEHIND, IS NOT TO DIE."

CHARLES WESLEY SPEERS

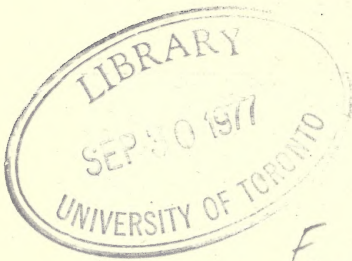
1856-1920

In Affectionate Memory



C. H. Jones

BORN NORVILLE, ONTARIO, 22nd FEBRUARY, 1856
DIED BUTTE, MONTANA, U.S.A., 27th MARCH, 1920



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*"Not a charm that we knew, ere the boundary was crossed,
And we stood in the valley alone;
Not a trait that we praised, in our dear one, is lost;
They have fairer, and lovelier grown.
As the lilies burst forth, when the shadows of night,
Into bondage at daybreak are led,
So they bask in the glow, by the pillar of light
In the land of the beautiful dead."*



THE announcement of the death of Charles Wesley Speers, General Colonization Agent of the Dominion Government, was received throughout all Western Canada with the deepest regret.

He passed quietly away at the home of his daughter, Mrs. H. C. Hopkins, Butte, Montana, on March 27th, 1920, in his sixty-fourth year. Fortunately Mrs. Speers, who was visiting there, was with him at the end. He died in harness. Only the day before he had come in from Spokane, Washington, where he held a busy session, and was on his way east to Regina, there to confer on important business. The call came suddenly, but not entirely without warning. To his wife and family and to his intimates there had been a physical falling off for some months past. He had occasional and unusual little illnesses. They did not diminish his courage or quench his hopeful, cheerful spirit, but they were undoubtedly occasional warnings of impending trouble. The hearty, healthy, strong man had changed somehow, as if in unconscious and mysterious preparation for the great adventure into the shadows of "that bourne from whence no traveller returns." He passed away calmly and quietly. "After life's fitful fever he sleeps well."

The death of Mr. Speers removed a strong and forceful figure from the public life of the western provinces of Canada, and the sense of this public loss called for some sincere and friendly expression from those who knew and labored with him, to the end that he remain with them and all who loved him a green and fragrant memory.

Charles Wesley Speers was born at Norville, Ontario, on February 22nd, 1856, a son of Archibald Speers, an Ontario yeoman of Irish extraction, a frequent local preacher in the old Methodist Church of Canada, and a man of deep spiritual emotion. The boy was named after one of the Wesley brothers, the pioneers of Methodism. Young Wes, as he was ever and everywhere familiarly called, was raised in a strongly religious atmosphere and retained through all his years an unusual faculty for religious and denominational discussion. He was educated in the public school at

Brampton and subsequently at Toronto, possessing even in youth much of his native shrewdness and business ability. He followed the plow—to use a homely phrase—and became a proficient and successful farmer, with a very special aptitude for and well-grounded knowledge of the cattle and livestock business.

He made a trip to England when a young man, and this experience ever remained the storehouse of memory and reminiscence. The wealth of his recollection for many years afterwards indicated his remarkable powers of observation and mental analysis. This trip widened his horizon, increased his knowledge of men and countries, brought vividly before him new channels of thought and experiences, and new possibilities of Canadian business extension.

Some few months after his return from England he was married to Miss Eliza Isabell Reid, a daughter of the late Mr. John Reid, of Markdale, Ontario. The nuptials took place at the home of the bride on the 19th October, 1882. Mr. Speers was singularly fortunate in his choice of a helpmate, because his young bride brought to their new home a refined and progressive spirit that looked forward to the pinnacles before them as obstacles to be reached and difficulties surmounted, if they should proceed comfortably along the pathway of life. Their eyes were turned westward into this new country, which at that time was beginning to attract attention in the east, and from which men came with marvellous stories of unexploited, undeveloped and inexhaustible resources. The young couple settled at Griswold in Manitoba in the Spring of 1884, and there set about building for themselves a home and a competence which stands to-day as a monument to the wifely management of the woman and the pluck and perseverance of the man. The farm succeeded and was extended until it became what it is to-day, one of the best properties in the neighbourhood.

Mr. Speers took an interest in local public affairs, became one of the most influential men in his neighbourhood, was a public speaker of conspicuous ability and eloquence and became so popular in his own community that he was nominated for the Federal House at Brandon in the early part of 1895, and had he been disposed for a public life would undoubtedly been elected for that constituency at that time with comparatively little difficulty.

The return of the Laurier Government in June, 1896, brought into power the Hon. Clifford Sifton, afterwards Sir Clifford Sifton, as Minister of the Interior. This able and brainy Minister determined on an energetic

and forward policy of immigration. Mr. Sifton had an uncanny instinct in the choice of suitable men for special purposes. In the opening months of his great immigration campaign, destined to become one of the greatest human movements in modern times, he invited Mr. Charles Wesley Speers to become General Colonization Agent of the Department in 1897. The vast movement, both from overseas and from the United States, had not yet commenced, but the then Minister of the Interior was laying his lines and shaping his course for a policy that would bring to the sparsely populated prairies of the west a vast population of agricultural producers, and to Mr. Speers he entrusted one of the most difficult and most responsible positions in the organization.

Neither Sir Clifford Sifton nor the people of Canada had ever occasion to regret this choice. Mr. Speers had those special qualities of heart and mind inseparable for the successful pursuit of a task of this kind. He made himself personally acquainted with every corner of the far flung prairie, learning its topography as well as its soil and possibilities in order that he might speak with accuracy and confidence to the settlers who were bound to come.

To most men this would be a tremendous task. Only those who deal with the vagaries of the members of the human family know anything of the difficulties of agricultural settlement from the human side, but the subject of this sketch was naturally equipped with just those qualities the task required.

He had a practical knowledge of western farming, gathered from long hours of arduous toil under all conditions. He had unbounded confidence in himself and in the work he was called upon to perform. He had an abiding faith in the possibilities of the western prairies. He had quick sympathies, keen perception, generous instincts, fearless courage, and irrepressible and unsubduable optimism. These were some of the qualities for his work, but not all of them; he had in a marked degree, wonderful powers of initiative. He was quick to size up a difficult set of circumstances, quick to suggest a remedy and quick to apply it.

It might be soberly said of Mr. Speers that he did not know when he was beaten. Obstacles in one way only suggested progress in another. He was the personification of the master pioneer, gifted with insight and imagination, coupled with an adaptability that enabled him readily to put into practical form his own theories and suggestions. It is no exaggeration to say that the successful settlement of Western Canada to-day owes

more to the personal effort of Charles Wesley Speers than to any other single man, past or present, connected with the settlement problems of the west.

Difficulties did not deter him, pessimism did not depress him. When once he had seen the course he was to pursue he took his courage in both hands and went forward unhesitatingly.

If one had to describe the special attributes or characteristics of this great Canadian citizen one would allude to his sympathizing understanding, to his constant readiness to help, to his generous instincts as being factors that laid the foundation for successful effort on the part of many a new settler who, without this help, would have probably gone down in the sea of difficulties. Mr. Speers was eminently practical in his colonization work. There was not in the bright lexicon of his thought such a word as failure. If it was wise it should be done then it should be done, if it were humanly possible it could be done.

As special features, and only because they bulk largely in the public eye, mention might be made of two very special colonization efforts carried through successfully under the personal direction of the late Mr. Speers, viz., the coming of the Doukhobor colony and the settlement of the Barr colony.

To old timers these will recall stirring memories, but to Mr. Speers they meant great responsibility, hard work and much self-sacrifice. The colonization of the Doukhobor colony was an almost superhuman task, for because in addition to the inherent difficulties of the situation he was dealing with a mass of people unable to speak or understand one word of English. His plans were well and truly laid, and coupled with his inexhaustible energy and dynamic power they succeeded with the minimum of irritation in placing them on the fertile belt of northern Saskatchewan.

Quite different, but no less difficult—indeed in some personal respects, even more difficult—was the settlement of the famous Barr colony in the Spring of 1903. A great untrained mob of unskilled men and women, obsessed with the idea of becoming agriculturists, dropped down in the then prairie town of Saskatoon, under the direction and leadership of a fanatical idealist, with less than an elementary knowledge of farming and none of the gifts of Moses for leading his people. Chaos reigned supreme when Mr. Speers took command of the march through the prairie from Saskatoon over the trails to distant Lloydminster.

It is impossible to describe the situation upon their arrival there. The great body of the immigrants,

utterly unaccustomed to outdoor life, depended upon tents which they could not erect, upon horses which they could not drive, upon implements which they did not understand, upon conditions absolutely foreign to them. A man less gifted, less determined and possessing less imagination than Mr. Speers would have turned his back upon the fiasco as being altogether beyond human endurance. But this was not his thought. Calmly, determinedly, persistently and patiently he set about bending their backs to the unusual task, and staying with them until they had really obtained some idea of what they were expected to do.

Scores of other incidents might be mentioned of successful colonization spread all over the country. The new homesteader looked upon him as a prophet, priest and king. He must tell them the weather they were to expect; he must lead them to the source of water, and he must agitate with the authorities for the construction of railways; and all these things he did as part of his daily duty.

In the crises that sometimes come in the west when fodder is short and food is scarce, and seed is hard to get, the strong arm of this colonization commander was stretched out to bring encouragement and relief, and in times when stress of weather endangered the lives of those in distant places, he has fought his way through against the tremendous elements, risking danger and death, to bring succour to those who in the pioneering days of the country would have perished but for the helping hand representing the western authorities.

In later days when railways have spread themselves net-like through the west, his task has been less arduous but even more daring, and the records of the Department abound with a rich crop of the most useful information covering every phase of western settlement.

Speaking of him as a citizen. He was of the broad-minded type that saw the points on both sides of an argument, and gave credit for sincerity even when he could not accept conclusions. His mind was of the constructive rather than the destructive type. He took pleasure in laying a sound foundation and building a solid superstructure in everything that he touched. One never felt hurt in disagreement with him, because he was so obviously open to conviction and so anxious to see your point that he disarmed one of the irritation that too frequently follows difference of opinion. He took a keen and abiding interest in public affairs, local, provincial and dominion. As a well-to-do farmer, having large farms at Griswold, and Speers, Saskatchewan, as well as a dear old home in the city of Brandon,

he was a considerable taxpayer and naturally was personally interested in the question of taxation, but he was not narrow-minded and grudged no expenditures that made for the general public benefit, though nothing might accrue to him from them. In provincial politics he was frankly a Liberal. A warm admirer of the Hon. Thomas Greenway, and a personal friend and admirer of the present Premier of Manitoba, the Hon. T. C. Norris. He held his opinions fearlessly, however, and hesitated not to approach the powers that be when he was of opinion that their policy was open to criticism or to question. This was done, however, always impersonally and without malice. He was a life long admirer, as well as a personal friend, of the late Right Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and this loyalty continued to the day of the death of the great statesman. As a stalwart liberal he believed in tariff for revenue only, and held all through an unqualified attachment to the principles and platforms of Canadian Liberalism. He was *persona grata* in all quarters. He was a "perfect mixer," to use a homely phrase. Interesting, instructive and amusing equally in the drawing-room of some distinguished public man in the east or in the kitchen of some Galician farmer in the west. It has been said of him "that he was a man so varied in his parts that he was not one but all mankind's epitome." He was logically minded, and unless he could see where an argument would land him he was rather wary of entering upon it, but once he did so carried it through with his natural enthusiasm. He was exceedingly Canadian, albeit, decidedly western in his outlook, but, in every sense a thoroughly typical citizen of no mean country.

Mr. Speers was a loving and affectionate husband and father. His existence centred around his home and his home life, and though in later years his business took him frequently away he came back to that scene as truly as the needle points to the pole. It has been said that his wife was a real helpmate. She became the repository of his business problems and plans, and he took pride in her matronly rule of all his home interests. He had all a father's pride in his children, perhaps a little more than his share. In the later years they became the centre of his existence. He shared and sympathized with them in their studies, their musical development and accomplishments appealed strongly to him. His home gave him great pleasure and satisfaction. He spoke with quiet pride of his son John, and beamed when he spoke of his daughters, Melinda, Bertha and Florence. He took a real personal interest in their settlement for life, and as one after

another of them left the old home he followed them with loving thoughts and interest not abated. Melinda became Mrs. A. W. Harcourt, whose husband holds a responsible position with the Wilson Fisheries Company, of Seattle, Wash., his second daughter Bertha married Mr. H. C. Hopkins, Attorney-at-law, Butte, Montana, at whose house he died. While the youngest daughter Florence became the wife of Mr. J. Parker Veasey, the Attorney of the Great Northern Railway Company for the State of Montana, and residing at Great Falls, Montana. In later years the direct practical management of the farms fell upon the shoulders of his son, Mr. John Speers, and the young man's good management of these properties gave the father unqualified satisfaction. It is needless to say that the sympathy of the vast concourse of his friends everywhere goes out to Mrs. Speers, thus rudely deprived of her life's companion, and to her children in the great sorrow that so suddenly fell upon them.

The late Mr. Speers was an ideal friend, never promising too much and performing too little. He was a shrewd business man and applied his business principles in business matters. He was open-handed and generous, and no friend in need ever applied to him and went empty handed away. He had a wealth of experiences in western life from which he drew generously in the interests of his friends, and counted no personal inconvenience too great to assist their progress and help them to something. He was a matchless raconteur with wonderful powers of imitation, vivid expressions, and a prodigious memory. As an entertainer he was a host in himself, his stories pungent, pointed and applicable, but withal without malice. He had an appropriate story for almost every conceivable occasion, but his anecdotes and reminiscences carried no dart of bitterness, nor wounded by sarcasm. Few men could tell a story as well and make it point a moral and adorn a tale. He was irrepressible, and inherited a generous share of genuine Irish wit.

"He who lives to bravely take
His share of toil and stress,
And for his weaker fellow's sake,
Makes every burden less,
He may at last seem worn,
Lie fallen hands and eyes
Folded; yet, though we mourn and mourn,
A good man never dies."

He was a speaker of considerable eloquence, in some of his flights approaching the eloquence of oratory. He had a wonderful command of language, a striking

versatility of expression, and a wide and diversified knowledge of men and things. His speeches scintillating with humor were always intelligible, interesting and instructive. He had, too, decided literary tastes, and his official reports were works of finished expression, clear, concise yet comprehensive. He had something of the artistic temperament, something of the Irish natural gift of expression, and it found its outflow in various directions. As a source of amusement to himself and his friends he sometimes occupied the tedious hours of travelling by writing little scraps of poetry or musical rhythm. He made no claim to wooing the muses nor did he expect any literary commendation. His turn for verse-making amused himself and afforded his friends pleasure. That was ambition enough.

Many newspaper paragraphs might be collected to express the public view of the loss sustained by his death, but the following article by one of the ablest journalists in Western Canada, and an intimate personal friend, published in a Western newspaper at the time of his death, will suffice to embrace the general newspaper view, in concrete form, of the work and death of this outstanding Canadian citizen.

A DISTINGUISHED JOURNALIST'S APPRECIATION

"When C. W. Speers died at Butte, Montana, a few days ago, Western Canada lost a great citizen. Indeed it is doubtful if any other individual ever made a larger contribution to the development of the West. He came of a splendid family of Canadian pioneers that, originating in the north of Ireland, carved Ontario out of the forest, and then spread its sons over the West to become potent factors in the wide young country that lay west of the Red River. C. W. Speers came west with the movement that followed the laying of the steel rails of the Canadian Pacific across the fenceless prairie. He and other members of his family commenced farming near Griswold, west of the Manitoba city of Brandon. It was an ideal mixed farming country. The black vegetable mold not only proved prolific wheat soil but was well adapted for all sorts of fodder crops; and there was abundant pasture and wild hay. Such a region appealed to C. W. Speers, who came of a stock raising family; and he established himself on a farm which he gradually increased and improved until to-day its fences enclose several thousands of acres, growing much grain and carrying a stock of well bred horses and cattle. When Sir Clifford Sifton, then a young man, but having already given indication of a remarkable constructive and executive gift, was appointed Minister of the Interior, away back in 1897, he gathered around him a wonderful coterie of able men, whose handling of the problems arising from the development of a new country have become historic. One of his outstanding executive lieutenants was C. W. Speers, or 'Wes' as he was called in the friendliness of western speech. He was appointed to the position of Colonization Agent, and never was a better appointment made. He was a splendid farmer, who knew his west, as did few others; he was a man respected amongst his fellows; was possessed of a strong and vigorous personality; and was an excellent and persuasive public speaker. At that time a great movement to the plains of Saskatchewan was just commencing. Its forerunner was the arrival of various groups of Euro-

pean immigrants who settled in communities at widely spaced intervals on the prairie. These people were in unfamiliar conditions and subject to the asperities of a fitful and rigorous climate. There were many difficult problems which were constantly occurring; but Mr. Speers was equal to them all. He was in charge of all operations in the field, and his responsibilities were many and numerous.

"One of his most trying experiences was with several thousands of that strange Russian community known as Doukhobors. These people are at times fanatical in their religious beliefs and observances. This particular party gathered at Yorkton, and in face of a gathering winter, set out in a body, on foot, and almost without food to search for the Lord Jesus. The country they traversed was wild and sparsely settled, and as they progressed, and their religious enthusiasm mounted, they cast off their garments and many of them continued their pilgrimage entirely naked. Religious fanatics are notoriously the most difficult to deal with, and these were particularly recalcitrant. But Mr. Speers handled the situation with tact and diplomacy. He succeeded in turning them back from their quest, and dispersing them to their homes. At that time amongst all the foreign born settlers he was the symbol of the democratic authority of Canada, and he was regarded as the councillor and friend of each community.

"There is neither time nor place here to mention even in skeleton outline a tithe of what he has accomplished in regard to the settlement of the West. There is one project which he carried to a successful consummation which cannot be overlooked. Who has not heard something of the epic story of the colonization of the Saskatchewan Valley? In 1902 there were only one or two settlers in the millions of acres which lay between the valleys of the Qu'Appelle and the Saskatchewan. The railway which ran through it was a streak of rust; trains only ran about twice a week; there was not an operator or station agent between Lumsden and Saskatoon; and herds of antelope flitted off into the prairie haze, before the sound of the locomotive. The country had a bad name; it was fit for nothing. Mr. Speers believed in it, however. He thought that there was nothing wrong with it except its reputation. He had endeavored to obtain an appropriation to test its capabilities, but he had been turned down cold. The minister, usually receptive enough to the suggestions of his subordinates, turned a very deaf ear to him. About 1902, in the early part of the year, the company, which has constructed the railway from Regina to Prince Albert, complained about the quality of this tract, which they had received under their charter as a land grant, and commenced suit against the Government, seeking a decision that it was not good agricultural land. The minister realized that if the courts gave forth such a decision, it would have an adverse effect upon the immigration that was coming along in such an encouraging manner. He did not believe much in the region himself, but he sent for Mr. Speers, its only advocate. He asked him if he thought it could be settled up, and on receiving a reply in the affirmative, despatched him to the United States with practically a free hand to induce, if possible, Americans with colonization experience, to take hold of the project. He went first to St. Paul, where he had several meetings with capitalists. He tried to inject some of his own faith into them; but even so far away the evil reputation of the country clung to it. A final meeting was held at which they definitely refused to be drawn into what they called a "wild cat" scheme. Discouraged and disheartened Mr. Speers prepared to return to Canada. He entered the station at St. Paul, and found that he had lost his transportation. He accordingly missed his train and went back to his hotel. On such little things does destiny wait. The next morning was Sunday; and after a good night's rest he felt his courage return. He had a good breakfast and walked out to the house of Mr. Warner, the only one of the capitalists who had shown any sympathy. This gentleman's family were at church, and he listened carefully to

Mr. Speers as he went over the ground again. At last he said, 'Well, Mr. Speers, there is a land man coming here to-morrow, in whose judgment I have great confidence. If you can interest him, you may count on me.' This gentleman was the late Colonel Davidson, whose name afterwards was closely associated with the settlement of the West. He accompanied Mr. Speers to the Saskatchewan Valley; a careful examination was made of the tract; and an offer was made to the Dominion Government and accepted to colonize the whole region. A special train was chartered in Chicago, and bankers, business men, farmers, and all interested in Canadian lands who could be gathered up, were taken on an expedition to the region. Mr. Speers went along. This project was an astonishing success, and the Saskatchewan Valley Land Company, as the new organization was named, sold enough land on the trip to relieve them of all anxiety as to the financial success of the enterprise. Settlers rushed into the country, and within a few years, the traduced district was producing millions of bushels of wheat; branch lines of railways were built; hundreds of elevators sprang up almost overnight; and many thriving towns came into existence. There never was a more successful colonization scheme projected and completed, and the major part of the credit belonged to Mr. Speers.

"There is no doubt that he saved the Barr Colony from disaster; and he has been the dominant figure all through the rush to the Saskatchewan, which was perhaps the greatest agrarian movement in modern history. No one has contributed more to our western development, and his achievements stand a monument to his memory.

"It was only last week that the writer accompanied him to Regina. He was full of his usual energy and enthusiasm. There was no sign of illness or weakness. He was a great, stalwart, striking figure of a man, and there was force and accomplishment in every line of that rugged and strongly marked profile. He spoke of his daughters, three beautiful and accomplished ladies, all married in the West. He said that his wife was at present visiting one of them at Butte, and when business on which he was then engaged should be concluded, he intended to go and bring her home. 'It is very pleasant and comforting,' he said, 'now that my good wife and I are getting on in years, to live again in our children, to see their families, and to know that they are happily established in life. We often visit them. Indeed it is a beautiful pleasure.' His relations with his daughters were very close. He had a graceful gift, known only to his intimates, of expressing himself in verse, and he carried on a pretty correspondence with them in this manner.

"He was a big man in every sense and none have played a more useful part in the making of the Great West. His figure has been a familiar one for so long that it is hard to believe that he has gone; that he will be seen no more about his busy occasions, that his voice is forever stilled. We are too near to the time of his activities for a proper appreciation of them, but no history of the West can be written that will not give him one of the largest places."

The remains were brought from Butte, Montana, to Brandon, accompanied by Mrs. Speers and the other members of the family. The funeral was held from the home on Princess Avenue, on the afternoon of March 31st, 1920, and was largely attended by friends from various parts of the country, among them being a representative of His Honor the Lieut.-Governor, the three great railway companies, the Dominion and Provincial Government, and by the Hon. T. C. Norris, Premier of Manitoba, who was one of the pall bearers,

and a very old and intimate friend of the late Mr. Speers. The funeral service for the family at the home was touching and impressive. The casket as it lay in the drawing-room was absolutely buried in a mass of the most beautiful and exquisite flowers, speaking in their dumbly eloquent way of the love and affection of the many neighbors who deplored the death of a kind hearted friend. The funeral arrangements had been made under the direction of Mr. Archie Speers, of Winnipeg, a brother. The public service was held in the Methodist Church. The weather was cold, rough and raw with bitter snow flurries. The skies were leaden and overcast, but notwithstanding these inclement conditions there was a large attendance of representative men. The funeral service at the church and at the graveside was conducted by the Rev. Wellington Bridgman, a pioneer Methodist Minister of Manitoba, and an old and esteemed friend of the Speers family in Ontario. The pall bearers were the Hon. T. C. Norris, Messrs. J. D. McGregor, Kenneth Campbell, S. Clement, M.P.P., A. E. Hall and W. J. Burchill.

The friends who leave us, do not feel that sorrow
Of parting, as we feel it, who must stay,
 Lamenting day by day,
And know when we wake, upon the morrow,
We shall not find in its accustomed place
 The one beloved face.

There is added to this appreciation a few selections from our friend's literary efforts. The little poem "Melberflo" takes its name from a combination of the first three letters in the names of his daughters, Melinda, Bertha and Florence. These little efforts are not included for the purpose of inviting public criticism. No literary merit is claimed for them, let them speak. They are printed just for what they are, and literary criticism is neither invited nor desired.

MELBERFLO

The flowing River cheers the vale
And spreads delight where'er it glides,
Till nature's source diverts its course,
 Diminishing volume, power and stride.

The sudden shock has ope'd its banks
And cut an artery to its brink:
One-third its volume disappears,
 Forming an independent link.

So fed by genial tribute streams,
 The new branch with strong currents flows,
Cheering the valley, plain and dale,
 Where happy associations grow.

Two-thirds the stream, with nimble feet,
 Glides on, and cheers on every hand;
The current ever calm and sweet,
 The brightest rivulet in the land.

Threatening convulsions do appear;
 May cut again into its side:
Departing waters glide away,
 Depleting still the parent stream.

They cheer the land where'er they flow,
 Two sister streams, with charming grace;
The lilies bloom on every hand,
 And comforts cluster 'round the place.

One-third is left, to wander on
 Through vales of flowers so pleasantly;
The birds sing sweetly all along,
 Her course is blessed with constancy.

This River from its fountainhead,
 Increased in volume as it ran;
Life, love and joy it ever spread,
 And scattered blessings o'er the land.

So, may its arteries flow in peace,
 Constantly blessed by fruit and flower—
Their rippling music never cease,
 While rustling through life's happy bowers.

Faith, Hope and Charity abound,
 The Muse has caught the triple sheen;
Three sister graces all around;
 Their names make up the pretty stream.

Sorrow and sadness—things unknown
 In Life's changing vicissitudes;
Blessings imparted will atone,
 And fill our hearts with gratitude.

This River means a complex name,—
 Printed on pillar you should know.
You've seen it often, time again,
 It simply means sweet MELBERFLO.

Parental hearts would ever grieve
At any contemplated care:
~~Death only~~ interest will relieve;
Continued happiness, their prayer.

Eliminate all care and strife,
Where'er in life they each may go;
Comforts abundant all through life,
Whose names make up sweet MELBERFLO.

Tired of the sonnet, let me cease
And cast aside my every care;
My claims, reluctant, I release,
Father and Friend their ills to share.

Written on January 12th, 1912, at Melberflo Villa, Brandon,
Canada, by C. W. Speers, while thinking of his three daughters—

Mel-inda	} Speers.
Bertha	
Flo-rence	

Dedicated to Mrs. H. C. Hopkins
on her Son,
HENRY STUART HOPKINS

Ring out ye bells, o'er Mineral Peak,
The Hills with copper all abound,
Of greater treasure I will speak,
One that exists above the ground.

Lineal descendant of a race,
The Royal "Stuarts" of British fame,
Usurper never can replace,
We thus perpetuate the name.

Chivalrous, although unhappy line,
History records the tale of woe,
Forced abdication they resign,
But Royalty they won't forego.

"Cromwell" his barbarous "Ironsides,"
His murderous horde, his Commonwealth
Is surely Common, all besides
The blood of "Stuarts" is Royal wealth.

The victims of sectarian strife,
Fanatics, bigots did abound,
Eliminating all in life
That in a noble race was found.

Ring out ye bells, fire a salute,
Let music fill the vacant place,
A Royal "Stuart" was born in Butte,
Before him lay a golden mace.

Let controversies ever cease,
Plantagenets or Tudoric live,
The claims we cannot well release,
Hereditary records give.

We will not let the record pass,
No assimilation will deface,
The Royal line shows every caste,
And nothing can its crest erase.

The name of Stuart perpetuate,
The remnant of that race we see,
They cannot be disconsolate,
With all inherent chivalry.

May he who bears the name in Butte,
Develop manly, mental powers,
In all things be more resolute
Than Royal predecessors were.

Redeem for them the unhappy past,
Still cling to Royal, Signet, Seal,
A brilliant star the good recast,
A wealth of genius to reveal.

Let mixtures of the Mongrel Clan
Cease to deride at Royal birth,
Their origin they cannot scan,
These creatures of the sordid earth.

Eliminate all jealous fear
In happy mood, or visage grim,
Reflect and drop a thankful tear
If predecessors have no sin.

Cease ever all sectarian strife,
Pupil of biased history's page.
Disciple so impressed in life,
Show the spirit of the sage.

Their vacillation we concede,
Their weakness we can't condone,
Deal gently with the broken reed,
That should have occupied a throne.

Presumptuous, ignorant, blatant, brood,
Desist the boasting of your creed,
Theirs have attacks, assaults withstood,
And stand secure in every need.

EVELYN JONES

Angel of Light, what brought you here
To cheer our hearts and bless our homes?
Thou art to us so very dear,
Sweet little grandchild, Evelyn Jones.

What charms thy little self employ
To allure, entrance, in prattling tones:
"By-bye," how greatly we enjoy,
From the dear little lips of Evelyn Jones.

Parental hearts both beat in pride;
Their troubles all, thy grace condones:
None but the envious would deride
The sweetness of dear little Evelyn Jones.

Grandma, so happy, free from care,
Well reconciled from all her groans,
Contented now, I do declare,
The blessings come with Evelyn Jones.

Grandpa, so fat and puffy, struts
To extol thee above so many drones,
All others mentioned are but "Mutts"
Compared with little Evelyn Jones.

The Maiden Aunties look with grace;
Their fate and loneliness bemoan:
They envy much sweet Clara's place
With her dear little Evelyn Jones.

Oh happy child, image sublime,
The virtue every grace enthrones:
Thy face to us seems so divine,
Fit for the Kingdom, Evelyn Jones.

Proud of thy birth, relations all,
In admiration none disowns,
According kindred love to fall
On their sweet fancy, Evelyn Jones

We see thy little form so sweet,
We watch it now where'er it roams;
The patter of thy little feet;
None other like our Evelyn Jones.

Life's opening flower spreads sweet perfume,
Equal to that of either zones.
We hope that thou wilt be immune
From care and danger, Evelyn Jones.

May blessings follow thee through life,
In childhood, girlhood, to the end;
Happy surroundings, free from strife,
And constant comforts life attend.

ODE TO THE BIRD OF PARADISE

I give this bird of costly price,
Appropriate gift to you I ween,
Known as the Bird of Paradise,
For you to wear with gracious mien.

Your head bedeck its golden crest,
Your many happy days be blessed;
Its plumage glistens in the sun
As brilliant as the deeds you've done.

For selfish adornment and pride
This bird was made a sacrifice.
Let not inhuman minds decide
The nature that shall wear the prize.

Stricken to death,—relentless hand,
In nature's home, the Orient;
Brought hither to adorn the band
Of feminine grace in Occident.

Oh blessed bird, plumage sublime;
May rougher nature learn of thee;
Stamped with an impress so divine,
The beauty calls forth ecstasy.

Oh sacred bird, thy pinions fanned
The fragrant bower of southern zone;
And thou art here by art embalmed,
To beautify, not guilt atone.

May she who wears thee, fair and bright,
Beneath thy crest and plumage shine;
Thy image teach of radiant light,
Remote from sorrow and decline.

Milton has written Paradise Lost,—
To all humanity, what cost;
Although mankind still feels the strain,
This emblem take and Paradise gain.

Dread not Inferno by Dante,
Nor Milton's terrors of the damned;
Keep on in perfect constancy,—
Salvation's way was wisely planned.

Let not Byronic style allure,
Nor gifted Burns your path portray;
The steady way is ever sure;
Retain the tenor of your way.

Comparisons of gifted minds
Confuse, confront and stultify:
Contrasted, they are human kind;
Their strange vagaries mystify.

Oh happy equilibrium keep,
Balanced on virtue's lofty plane,
This is a safe, a sure retreat,
And void of sorrow, care and pain.

Continue in the path of peace,
The blessings you have ever known,
Till death all earthly things release,
Not crested plume, but crown your own.

LINES ON THE DEATH OF A FAVORITE MARE

Thou wert my hope in future time,
Bred in the purple of thy strain,
Reluctantly I pen this line,
O'er thee no man shall hold the rein.

Thy sisters raced in circuit grand
To show the world what blood could do,
Thou wert the best on every hand,
No opportunity came to you.

Collins and Curran, Gillespie too,
Knights of the sulky will deplore,
Premature death should come to you,
Where hope was centered evermore.

I thought to see thy perfect form
Matured, symmetrical and good,
Thy prowess show in days to come,
The idol of the multitude.

Called by a name I loved so well,
To me the greatest of her race,
"Belle Bryson," worthy who can tell,
None other can that name replace.

I never loved an equine fair,
Nurtured and reared by me alone,
But when it seemed past every care
It was as surely to succumb.

Thy sire and dam, both aged and old—
Kentucky blood, their former home—
Both housed by me in plain abode,
Seem stricken at thy prostrate form.

But thou art gone, Forget, Forget,
Blighted the hope of our desire;
A passing line shows our regret,
Things more important do transpire.

MORTAL MAN

Man passes on like drifting smoke,
Ambition marks his fitful way;
No eclipse doth his way provoke,
In column dark he holds the sway.

No anchor holds the steady stream,
No gravitation will allure;
It presses on with gusts between,
On into infinite azure.

But as it moves along we watch
Its frantic movements do attract,
Although we do the volume catch
More impotent and less intact.

Thinner appearing to the eye
It urges on with steady course,
Holding its sway along the sky,
We contemplate its ending source.

Slowly it dissipates, observed,
We look to see its silvery trail
In fragments here and there preserved,
But volume seeming to curtail.

Gone from our gaze for evermore,
Obliterated, spent, absorbed;
The goodness we have left in store
Shall stand to us a just reward.

Let us retrace the smoky trail
To see what sparks of kindness fell:
That charity will never fail
Posterity proclaims and tells.

Let goodness all your acts attend
In column thick or thinner drift;
Be gracious never to offend,
From others do the burden lift.

Ambition, show and pride all gone,
Absorbed in time's relentless course;
Kindness and charity alone
Will live forever with their source.

Few on horizon's time stand out,
On history's page, or honor's roll,
Mark well your acts—to good procure,
You pass into infinite azure.

So passes mortal man away,
Divested of stability;
Time should be spent while here we stay,
For hope of immortality.

"THE FINALE"

Sing sweetly to me Poet bold,
Their happiness I want to know;
Inspired as in the days of old,
The pleasures of sweet Melberflo.

Like fragrance cast upon the air,
Refreshing, wholesome and complete,
Their presence dissipated care
And made environment so sweet.

At eventide their songs would cheer
The happy throng they had allured;
Their merriment dispelled all fear,
All cheerfulness was well assured.

As oft requested they would go
To function, social, tea or dance,
Leaving behind sweet Melberflo
To charm, delight and to enhance.

The triple cluster shed its light
To brighten up old Melberflo,
They chased away the hours of night,
And made all merriment aglow.

The triune group has been impaired—
One leaves, such calls do come in life;
The dual branch is here declared,
So brilliant, ever free from strife.

Again invasion wrecks the branch,
Leaving but one bright light alone;
Inspired by necessity, perchance,
It does for all the rest atone.

How luminous this single light,
That sheds its lustre all around;
Ever so comforting and bright,
Replete with blessings that abound.

What strange eclipse comes o'er our eyes
To make that light grow even dim;
That comes to us a great surprise,
It really should be called a sin.

The last fond light that cast its glow,
Shedding its lustre on the home
Known by the name of Melberflo,
We have a fear will soon be gone.

Ah, triple sheen in days of yore,
In triune sisterhood complete,
The memories we all adore
Cling to our hearts in emblems sweet.

Those happy days to us so dear,
In childhood, girlhood, in the home
Surroundings now seem very dear
As we are left alone, alone.

Respective happiness be yours,
Each domiciled in separate homes;
Goodness deservedly assures
The blessings that will ever come.

In looking back, oh happy days,
Each hour so full of goodness seems,
As playful children, merry lays,
Your early songs we did esteem.

In later days the sonnet rang
To fill the home with radiant light,
As Bertha or Melinda sang
To cheer, enliven and delight.

One star was left within the crown,
That brightly shone on Melberflo,
With radiant lustre all its own,
Continued blessings seemed to flow.

The triune group, the triple sheen,
The sisters three, happy trio;
How sacred all thy memories seem,
The happy days of Melberflo.

Reviewed, contrasted and compared
In life with others we have known,
Their goodness stands quite unimpaired
And has a record all its own.

What pleasure springs within the breast,
The pride parental hearts both feel,
To know each sister played her part,
All other sorrows seemed to heal.



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In memoriam Charles Wesley
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